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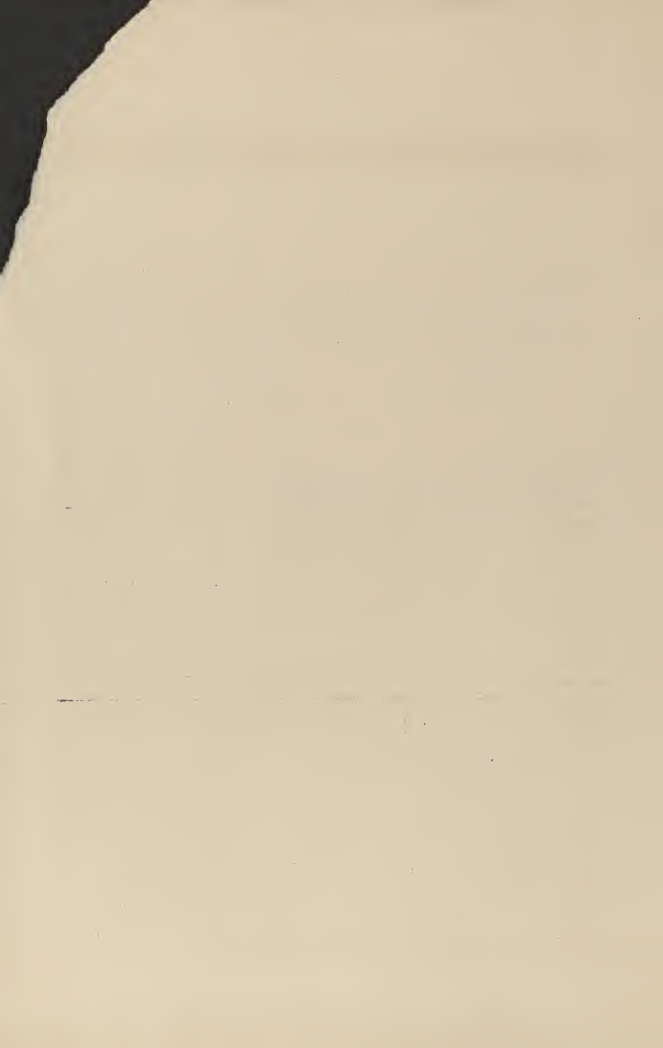
MARCUS WHITMAN


AND THE

Settlement of Oregon.

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BY

F. F. ELLINWOOD.





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BEFORE visiting Oregon last autumn, I read an interesting discussion carried on between the *Missionary Herald* and certain newspaper writers in Oregon and Washington, in relation to Dr. Marcus Whitman, and the influence which he exerted upon the destiny of our great Northwest. The fact that some—not all—of the Hudson's Bay Company's agents and the early Jesuit missionaries on the Columbia have generally been supposed to have fostered that hostility of the Indians which resulted in the massacre of Dr. Whitman and others, had called forth various attempts to disprove the salient facts of his history and to rob him of all credit for the important part which he acted.

This last controversy had been brought about by certain articles from the pen of Hon. Elwood Evans. Advancing beyond the ground usually taken on his side of the controversy, he had even denied that Dr. Whitman had anything whatever to do with the settlement of Oregon, and that he did not even go to Washington on his celebrated visit to the East in the Spring of 1843.

Mr. Evans was unfortunate in undertaking the always difficult task of proving negatives. Ignorance of facts on the part of a contestant is always a precarious kind of proof against data which, for aught he knows, may be in possession of everybody but himself. Mr. Evans apparently forgot that however scarce such data concerning Dr. Whitman might be on the shores of Puget Sound, they were likely to be very abundant in the East where Dr. Whitman was born, and where many of his friends might still survive, and especially at Boston, where a great mass of contemporary and related correspondence was sure to have been preserved.

Rev. Thomas Laurie, D. D., of Providence, R. I., a person well versed in the history of the missions of the American Board, came forward with a mass of incontestable facts which rendered Mr. Evans' position worse than ridiculous. I have borrowed largely from Dr. Laurie's authorities in this paper.

On my way to Oregon I also read in the appendix of Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson's *Century of Dishonor* certain statements from Ebbitt, an army officer, in relation to the Whitman massacre and the execution of his murderers. It represented Dr. Whitman not as a hero but as a fool, while it exalted his assassins to the honor of glorious and voluntary martyrdom. Three high-minded and patriotic Indians, according to this writer, voluntarily offered themselves to appease the blood-thirstiness of the people of Oregon, who, though convinced of the probable innocence of their victims, howled with delight as they witnessed their death agonies at the execution.

These discussions naturally enkindled anew my interest in Dr. Whitman, and I found at Portland others who shared that interest, and who expressed a desire that the thrilling history of his life and death should be substantiated by such proofs as should challenge all so-called refutations.

In response to a request from Mr. W. S. Ladd, of Portland, I resolved to pay a visit to Petaluma, California, for the purpose of obtaining an interview with Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Canfield, who had a sad part in the Whitman massacre, on November 29, 1847. I was accompanied by Rev. Thomas Frazer, of Oakland.

We found Mr. Canfield, who still carries a bullet received at the massacre, and Mrs. Canfield, who, with her five children, was held in captivity during a month of anguish by the Indians. They appeared to be in good health, and whatever else they may have forgotten, the minutest incidents of the great tragedy were vivid after the lapse of thirty-eight years. I took precise and careful notes of their statements at the time, and also procured fuller accounts by letter. Many of the following details are from the lips of these venerable eye-witnesses.

The Missionary Settlement of Oregon.

In 1833 a delegation of the Nez Perces visited St. Louis to ascertain the truth of certain representations, which a white man had made, of a religion superior to any that the Indians had known. An account of the visit is given in Catlin's well-known work upon the American Indians. Within two years after that visit the Methodist and the American Boards sent each two missionaries to respond to this Macedonian call. The Methodist missionaries sailed by the way of Cape Horn; those of the American Board, Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. Samuel Parker, left St. Louis with a company of fur traders, and proceeded as

far as the foot of the Black Hills. There, in response to the requests of certain Sioux chiefs, Mr. Parker remained for the purpose of preaching to them the Way of Life, while Dr. Whitman returned to the East for reinforcements. In 1836 he again set out, with Rev. Henry Spaulding, and both were accompanied by their wives.

Their passage over the mountains was full of trying experiences, which cannot here be given. At the divide of the continent the party were met by a company of Nez Percés, who had come to welcome them, and by the tender care of whose women, Mrs. Spaulding and Mrs. Whitman, after great exhaustion by their journey, were so refreshed as to be enabled to reach their destination with comparative comfort.

The reports of this overland journey gave a great impetus to the cause of colonization, and so many American settlers followed on the newly-opened trail that the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company became apprehensive that what are now Oregon and Washington might become American possessions. The company not only resisted all American influence as involving an element of danger to its interests, but it opposed civilization, and especially agriculture, lest a diversion to such pursuits should render the Indians less available as hunters, and should also tend to raise the price of furs, and so diminish the enormous profits of the trade.* And there appears to be good evidence of the fact that the Company encouraged the advent and the projects of the Jesuit missionaries, who, it was hoped, would cripple, if not supplant, the American Protestants.

By the year 1842 Dr. Whitman, then settled at Waiilatpu, now the little station called "Whitman," had become so deeply interested in American colonization that his brother missionaries were led to doubt the propriety of his schemes. And I think that the American Board's correspondence, so far as published, gives evidence that at Boston also, his plans, seen simply from a missionary standpoint, were seriously questioned. By the summer and autumn of 1842 the encroachments of the Jesuits had advanced so far that the question arose whether the station at Waiilatpu, near Fort Walla Walla (now Walula Junction) should not be given up. Dr. Whitman, however, did not favor it. He at length resolved to visit the East, not merely to consult the Board about the mission, but especially to prevail upon the Government at Washington to use all means for the encouragement of migration across the mountains, and, above all, to prevent the ratification of the Ashburton Treaty, which, he had understood, was to give our great Northwest coast to Great Britain. The 5th of October had been set for starting upon his journey, but on a professional visit at Fort Walla Walla a certain conversation which he overheard concerning an expected

*J. P. Dunn., Jr., *Massacres of the Mountains*, p. 88.

reinforcement of European settlers and Jesuit missionaries, and an exulting prediction that that would "forever settle the pretensions of the Americans," led him to hasten his departure on the 3d, instead of the 5th of October.

On the 3d of February, just four months from the date of starting, he appeared at St. Louis in the garb of a weather-beaten mountaineer, with buffalo coat and leather breeches, his ears and hands and feet being more or less frost-bitten. A month later he reached Washington. He supposed that the Ashburton Treaty had not yet been signed. It had, in fact, been signed the August before; but it had traced the boundary lines only to the Rocky Mountains, leaving the ownership of all west of that yet to be decided.

As a result of his interviews with Mr. Webster and with President Tyler, it was understood that he should demonstrate the feasibility of overland emigration by taking out a colony in the Spring of 1843. The thrilling incidents of that overland journey would well repay a perusal. Dr. Whitman led over the continent a large company of settlers, and again established himself at Wailatpu, where he continued to act in the two-fold capacity of missionary and general manager of immigration. That he enjoyed the confidence of the Board at Boston, though he had very much to do with the settlement of Oregon—more, in fact, than the Board desired—the following extract from a letter from Rev. Mr. Green, one of the Secretaries at that time, will show. Under date of February 26, 1846, Mr. Green wrote:

"I fear from your account of what you have to do for the whites and Indians in respect to mills, houses, etc., that you will almost lose sight of the great spiritual objects of your mission, and be too nearly satisfied with seeing the Indians advance in industry and the arts of civilized life. What we desire is that, at the same time, you make your missionary character and object prominent. You are doing a most important work for the temporal and social welfare of the Indians, and one perhaps indispensable to their enjoyment of Christian privileges; but is as much done proportionately for their spiritual interests?"

On the other hand, the following extract, from a reply of Dr. Whitman, written April 1, 1847, will reveal his position:

"I have been reflecting on the fact that you told me that you were sorry that I came East. It did not then, nor has it since, altered my opinion in the matter. From 1835 until now it has been apparent that there was a choice of only two things—first, the increase of British interests, to the exclusion of all others in the country; or, second, the establishment of American interests by citizens on the ground. In the fall of 1842 I pointed out to our mission the arrangements of the Papists to settle here, which might oblige us to retire. This was urged as a reason why I should return home and try to bring out men to settle in the country, on the footing of citizens, and not as missionaries. You will please receive this as an explanation of many of my measures and much of my policy."

The Massacre.

From the date of this letter, on to the 29th of the next November, the

sky continued to darken over the head of Dr. Whitman. New settlers arrived in the early autumn, among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Canfield, named above. Among the buildings at the mission station was what was known as "the emigrant house," in which new comers might find shelter until arrangements for permanent settlement could be made. There was also a mill, a blacksmith's shop, a school, etc. There appear to have been in the little settlement something over a dozen white men with eight women, and between thirty and forty children. Some of these had brought with them the measles and the dysentery. Mr. Canfield represents the attitude of McBean, who was in command at Fort Walla, as hostile toward the missionaries at Wailatpu, while with the Jesuits he was on the best of terms. And he is very sure that much had been done by the Fort Walla Walla people and by the Jesuits to prejudice the Indians against the Americans, and especially Dr. Whitman. The most had been made of the fact that the sickness had come with the new arrivals.

Even Dr. Whitman's untiring devotion to the sick, both of the Indians and the whites, and his young wife's equally assiduous efforts to administer relief, could not avail to overcome the notion that the Americans must be sacrificed ere the epidemic could be checked. Dr. Whitman was advised to leave, and he himself felt the danger, but he was not a man to abandon his post. On the morning of November 29, according to the account given by the Canfields, the various occupations of the station were proceeding as usual; Dr. Whitman was writing at his desk; Mr. Canfield and Mr. Kimball were dressing an ox not far from the house; the carpenter, the blacksmith and the tailor were working at their vocations when, upon the hills near at hand, an unaccountably large number of Indians appeared. Over sixty of these approached the houses, and in an unusual manner distributed themselves over the premises. Much anxiety was beginning to be felt when, with the signal of a warwhoop, the work of murder commenced. An Indian struck Dr. Whitman from behind with a tomahawk, which felled him to the floor. Messrs. Canfield and Kimball were both shot, and were supposed to be dead. All the other men who could be found were supposed to have been killed.

The scene, as pictured by Mr. and Mrs. Canfield, was one of horror. The bodies of the dead and the dying were in some instances horribly mutilated, while the women and children, in an agony of terror, knew not which way to turn. All expected to be slain. Mrs. Whitman, with two other ladies and several children, accompanied by Mr. Rogers, a young student, succeeded in reaching the attic of the main building, where they found an old gun, which for a time kept the Indians at bay. Others of the women and children were in the emigrant house and the school building.

Thus they passed a night of horror, with no light in the houses, with the dead bodies of husbands and fathers lying in their gore all about the premises, and with the hootings of the Indians resounding in their ears. Mrs. Whitman, who had received a bullet in her shoulder from some Indian who had fired through the window, spent the night in bodily pain as well as mental anguish. The Indians repeatedly tried to induce her and the others in the attic to descend, making fair promises of safety. In the morning, having failed with promises, they succeeded by threatening to fire the house. As they descended, Mrs. Whitman, fainting at the sight of her husband's body, was borne out of the house on a sofa by young Rogers and a French half-breed, whereupon she was at once killed with a tomahawk, and Mr. Rogers was shot.

A council was then held by the savages to decide what should be done with the women and children, and while they were in doubt a friendly chief, known as "Old Beardy," rode into the midst of them and by his commanding influence saved their lives. Mrs. Whitman was the only woman killed. The seven survivors with thirty-two children were spared, on the condition that they would cook for the Indians, and make them garments from the cloth which was found among the stores of the station. Unutterable atrocities, however, were visited upon some of the grown-up girls.

Mr. Hall, the carpenter of the settlement, having escaped from the Indians, found his way to the fort, where he was refused protection. McBean, the commandant, did go so far, however, as to send him across the river to seek safety as best he could. He was never heard from afterward. His wife and five children were among the captives. Mr. Osborn, who had succeeded in hiding himself and his sick wife and children under the floor which was being laid in one of the buildings, escaped with his family in the darkness of the night. He was obliged to leave his wife on the way, on account of her great weakness, while he proceeded to the fort. There, according to Mr. and Mrs. Canfield, the heartless commandant refused to give them shelter, on the shallow plea that the fort would be in danger. He did, however, grant them the privilege of finding refuge in a farm house at some distance from the fort. When the suffering wife was brought thither (and here the description of the Canfields was very graphic), she refused to remain in a place so utterly unprotected. With her husband she went again to the fort and said to the commandant: "If we are killed by the Indians we shall die under the walls of this fort, and the responsibility must remain with you." Upon this plea they were at length admitted, and their lives were spared. Rev. Henry Spaulding, then of the Lapwai Station, gives the following account of his own escape on the day after the massacre. It is copied from a letter of his published in the *Missionary Herald* of July, 1848 :

“JANUARY 8, 1848.

“I was at the Utila, twenty miles west of Waiilatpu, at the time of the massacre, and remained there, visiting the sick and preaching to the Indians, till Wednesday morning, at which time I left for the residence of Dr. Whitman. When I was within about three miles of the station, I met a Roman Catholic priest, his interpreter, and a Cayuse. After some conversation, the Indian wheeled about, and, with great speed, proceeded toward the house of Dr. Whitman, when the priest informed me of what had taken place. Having requested him to take charge of my pack-horse, I took some provisions which he had prepared for the night, and gave myself into the hands of God, and turned my horse to the plains. In the meantime the Indian had returned toward Dr. Whitman's to re-load his pistol and wait for me to come along. He had started with the priest with the intention of killing me; but, stopping to smoke, he had accidentally discharged his pistol in lighting his pipe, and had neglected to re-load. After waiting awhile he wheeled again on his track and followed the priest, who had providentially made great speed, and had gone some ten miles before the Indian overtook him. Not finding me there, nor learning from the interpreter what direction I had taken, he returned again to the point of meeting and took my track; but darkness soon coming on he was stopped for the night.

“Suffice it to say, the Lord delivered me from my pursuer. I traveled nights and lay concealed in the day time. The second night my horse left me. I had now ninety miles to walk without food; I must leave everything, even my boots, as they were too small. But, praised be the name of God, the fourth night I reached home without great suffering.

“A dispatch was sent immediately from Walla Walla to this place. Mr. Ogden, with two boats and a great amount of property, proceeded with all haste to Walla Walla, sent an order for myself and family and the Americans at Lapwai to join him. We reached Walla Walla in four days, escorted by about forty Nez Percés, to protect us from the Cayuses. Here we found the captives from Waiilatpu, rescued by the very prompt and judicious efforts of Mr. Ogden. He paid fifty blankets to the Cayuses for the captive with a large amount of other property.”

Mr. Canfield who, with Mr. Kimball, had been shot while “dressing a beef,” near the house, stole away after nightfall, and finally reached Lapwai, daily “hiding in the underbrush,” as he himself states, “until the Indians were housed for the night. Peeping at them from my hiding place, I could see them scouring the country for me, but I escaped.”

It is a fact of no little interest that the father of the present Chief Joseph was the Chief of the escort named above.

He had been warned by other Indians that he would be killed by the whites, but he persisted, and, as he delivered up his charge, he said: “Now I show my heart. When I left home I took the book (a Testament given him by Mr. Spalding), and brought it with me. It is my light. I heard the Americans were coming to kill me, still I held my book before me and came on. I do not wish my children engaged in this war. As you speak of the murderers, I shall not meddle with them. I bow my head. This much I speak.”

Although measures were soon taken to bring the murderous Cayuses to punishment, they resulted only in driving them to the mountains,

where for many months, though separated from their homes and subjected to great privations, they refused to surrender. But in 1850, by a large force, under the command of General Joseph Lane, they were entirely subdued, and gave up five of the leaders of the massacre. Ebbitt (referred to above), undertook, in the *Army and Navy Journal*, of November, 1879, to give the true "history" of the massacre, and of the punishment of the murderers. He informed the people of Oregon "that a minister by the name of Whitman, * * * one of Wesley's followers, (I) had gone up to the Walla Walla region, where he was kindly received by the Cayuses; but upon the breaking out of the measles among the Indians, which swept many away, prejudice was created against Mr. Whitman, who was notified that he must leave. Filled with zeal for the cause, and not having sense enough to grasp the situation, he refused to go. So the mission was cleaned out, the missionary and nearly all those connected with him being killed."

The article represents that General Joseph Lane was influenced by political motives in "stirring up the matter of the murder of the Whitman family," that he so pressed the Indians that they held a council, in which "they deliberated upon the question whether they should yield to the terms proposed or abandon their country forever." In a noble speech, which Ebbitt ascribes to these braves, they "informed General Lane that three of their principal men had volunteered to go to Oregon City and be tried for murder."

"This satisfied the Governor," Ebbitt continues, "and the men bade farewell to their wives and little ones, knowing that they would never see them again. They knew that they were going among those who thirsted for their blood, and that they were to be hung like dogs. The trial was soon over; the Indians were condemned to be hung. Without a murmur or sigh of regret, and with a dignity that would have impressed a Zulu with profound pity, these men walked to the gallows and were hung, while a crowd of civilized Americans, men, women and children of the nineteenth century, looked on and laughed at their last convulsive twitches. A generation has passed away since the execution or murder of these Indians at Oregon City. The little, nasty town was the scene of a self-immolation as great as any of which we read in history, and there were not three persons there who appreciated it. The accursed town is, we hear, still nastier than ever, and the intelligent jury, not one of whom dared to have a word of pity or admiration for those poor Indians, with the spectators of that horrid scene, are either dead and damned, or they are sunk in the oblivion that is the fate of those that are born without souls."

But, on the other hand, the language of Mr. and Mrs. Canfield in regard to this outrageous misrepresentation is vigorous indeed. It should be borne in mind that *Mrs. Canfield was a slave of these murderers for an entire month; that she knew all about them, and could not be mistaken as to who the guilty parties were* They had even boasted of their deeds, and one of their number had claimed a grown-up girl as his slave, on the plea that he himself had killed her brother.

The written statement of Mr. and Mrs. Canfield is as follows:

"General Lane told them that he would kill the last one of them or get the murderers. They were thoroughly frightened, and promised to deliver up the *five*, not *three*, who were executed at Oregon City,* Telikait, the chief, being one of them. They were tried, found guilty and hanged, *the widows and older orphans being there to identify them and prove their guilt.* There were many other Indians who would not be taken alive. The chief men of the tribe promised to kill the other murderers. A man named Craig, who lived at Lapwai, declared them all killed a short time after—sixty-two in all."

He adds: "Will you please inform me what manner of man that officer is who calls those savage Indians innocent, and the American citizens savages? Myself and some others who are at present my neighbors were in that Cayuse war. Be sure and send that officer's name." It would be interesting for this Ebbitt, who, with so much assurance, maligns the people of Oregon and lauds the three "volunteer sufferers," to confront these surviving widows and children, who, after suffering for an entire month the cruelty of the Indian murderers, identified them under oath and testified to their guilt; and it would be well if in future editions of the "Century of Dishonor," this clear statement of Mrs. Canfield, who was an eye-witness both of the murder and of the slavery and outrage which followed it, could be published in a foot note accompanying Mr. Ebbitt's romantic misrepresentation.

How far the Indians were instigated to the massacre is a question which will probably never be settled. That some of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers and all of the Jesuit missionaries did much to prejudice the Indians against the Americans, and earnestly desired their removal from the country, is beyond a doubt. But that they intentionally instigated the perpetration of the murder is not proven. Charity would suggest the theory that the result of their influence was more tragic than they had anticipated. The commandant at Fort Walla Walla at that time cannot be too strongly condemned. But the course pursued by Messrs. Ogden and Douglass, chief factors of the Hudson's Bay Company, was eminently wise and humane. They promptly used every effort to ransom the captive women and children. The following tribute, which Mr. Canfield pays to their tact and good judgment, is an evidence, I think, of his candor and the value of his testimony:

"Messrs. Ogden and Douglass, chief men of the Hudson Bay Company, knew the American character, and kept all knowledge of the

*Telikait, as chief, ordered the massacre. He also allowed his sons to make the three grown-up girls of the captive company the victims of their lust. Another of those who were executed was Tamatsy, the man who gave the first blow to Dr. Whitman. Such were some of Ebbitt's martyrs.

massacre from the settlers in the Willamette Valley until he had concluded the purchase of the captives, for he knew that they would come up to punish the Indians at once. They were also familiar with the Indian character, and knew that if they heard that the Americans were coming they would kill the women and children who were their prisoners."

Proofs that Dr. Whitman was Chiefly Instrumental in Securing Oregon.

So far as the just fame of Dr. Whitman is concerned, the dispute as to whether his martyrdom was or was not instigated by the Jesuits is worse than profitless. Neither party will, at this distance of time, convince the other. Probably the zeal of Dr. Whitman's friends to establish the guilty complicity of the Catholic priests has in part aroused the hatred which has led those who were either Catholics or seekers for Catholic influence to deny to him that honor which otherwise all Americans, of whatever faiths, would have been prompt to accord to him. It is only through some strong partisan prejudice, otherwise unaccountable, that any man or woman residing in Oregon or Washington could be courageous enough to assail the memory of one who was really the father of his adopted country.

It is to be hoped that henceforth the sectarian element will be eliminated from the history of the massacre, while all shall cheerfully ascribe the honor which is due to the medical missionary who was first to appreciate and most earnest to secure the empire of the Columbia to our Republic.

Hon. Elwood Evans robs him of his laurels, and in this position he is sustained by Mrs. Victor, author of *The River of the West*, in a communication to the *Daily Astorian*. Both deny that Dr. Whitman went to Washington at all. But Dr. Thomas Laurie, of Providence, meets these negative assertions with a formidable array of facts. Thus Governor Ramsay wrote to Rev. M. Eells, missionary in Washington Territory, Aug. 15, 1883, as follows :

"In the winter of 1842 I visited Washington and called upon Mr. Joshua R. Giddings, then boarding on Capitol Hill, in Duff Green row. Mr. Giddings introduced me to Dr. Whitman, who talked to me of the difficulties of his late journey, the character of the country, Indian affairs, British encroachments, etc.

"The late Dr. Edward Hale, of St. Louis, with whom I was personally acquainted, says Dr. Laurie, wrote July 19, 1871, with reference to Dr. Whitman's visit in 1842 and 1843, as follows :

"I had the pleasure of entertaining Dr. Whitman at St. Louis, on his last visit eastward, to confer with the President and heads of Department in relation to the settlement of the boundary question. Also, on his return to Oregon, my house was his home while in St. Louis."

During the year 1884, Judge James Otis, of Chicago, having learned that Dr. Whitman's visit to Washington had been denied, wrote thus to Dr. Laurie :

"In the month of April, 1843, Dr. M. Whitman and myself were at the same hotel in Buffalo, N. Y., waiting for the ice to leave the harbor, so that we could take the steamboat to Cleveland, O. After some four days we took the stage for Dunkirk, and thence went by boat to Cleveland. He was a good talker and a man of great observation. He gave me an account of his experience among the Western Indians; *his trip to Washington, his interview with Webster at Washington*, who, he said, listened with much interest to his statements, and then remarked: 'I want the President and Cabinet to hear what you have said to me.' They were called together, and Dr. Whitman spent an evening with the Cabinet, answering their questions and giving them his views as to the importance of Oregon, and the steps that needed to be taken in order to secure it for this country. Our life together at the hotel and on the boat was intensely interesting."

This particular and graphic account of Judge Otis should be sufficient, but Dr. Laurie is severe enough to quote Mr. Evans against himself, where in the same communication, while aiming to disprove some other point, he says: "Dr. Whitman left the Columbia River, October 3, 1842, and arrived on the Potomac March 3, 1843."

As to the distinct statement of Mr. Evans that "Dr. Whitman had nothing to do with organizing or promoting the immigration of 1843," the mass of counter testimony is very great, since fortunately many of those who went to Oregon, upon Dr. Whitman's representations, and were assisted by him in their journey across the continent, are still living.

Mr. S. M. Gilmore, of Rockland, Washington Territory, says: "As to how many Dr. Whitman influenced I know not, but I am sure that he caused many to come who would not otherwise have done so, if they had not learned that he would be with them."

William Waldo, of Salem, Oregon, writes: "Dr. Whitman was in some of the Eastern States in the Winter of 1842-43, and wrote several newspaper articles in relation to Oregon. These letters decided my father to remove to this country."

Mr. C. B. Cary, Lafayette, Oregon, writes: "It was a pamphlet which Dr. Whitman wrote that induced me to come to Oregon."

Mr. J. Hobson, of Astoria, Oregon, says: "My father's family came from England to St. Louis in March, 1843, and while detained there, by snow and ice, from going to Wisconsin, met Dr. Whitman and others, who were talking of coming to Oregon; so by his account of the country and his proffered help in getting there, my father and family, M. Eyers and family, T. Smith, Mr. Ricord and J. M. Shivey all agreed to come, and they came."

Mr. John Zachrey, Brownsville, Oregon, says: "My father came to Oregon in 1843 from Texas. The occasion of his coming was a publication of Dr. Whitman's concerning Oregon. In it the Doctor described the soil, the climate and its desirableness for American colonies, and said that he had crossed the mountains that winter principally to take back that

season a wagon train to Oregon. We had been told that wagons could not be taken beyond Fort Hall, but in this pamphlet the Doctor assured his countrymen that wagons could be taken from Fort Hall to the Columbia River; that himself and his mission party had taken their families, cattle and wagons through six years before. It was this that induced my father and several of his neighbors to sell out and start at once for this country."

Other testimonies might be multiplied, but I will only add that received from the pen of Mr. Canfield, who was himself one of the Whitman emigrants of 1847. He says:

"From conversations which I had with Dr. Whitman in those days, my impression was positive that he was the chief instigator in getting the colonists to settle in Oregon. It was understood that his object in visiting the East, and especially Washington, was to have an American Government organized. He was anxious to have troops sent for our better protection. Dr. Whitman had the houses built, and hired men to show the Indians how to become farmers. He must have been the head of the mission and the colony, as all goods came to him and were distributed by him to the Indians and to the other missions."

That it was no easy matter to convince the Government and the public generally that Dr. Whitman's schemes were feasible will be made evident by the following utterances. In a speech delivered in Congress, Mr. Dayton, of New Jersey (February 23 and 26, 1844), said:

"With the exception of land along the Willamette and a few watercourses, the whole country is among the most irreclaimable barren wastes of which we have read, except the Desert of Sahara. Russia has her Siberia, and England her Botany Bay; and if the United States should ever need a country where to banish its rogues and scoundrels, the utility of Oregon would be manifest. We are nearer the remote nations of Europe than to Oregon. Talk of steam communication; who is to build a railroad across 2,500 miles of prairie, of desert and of mountains, and who is to supply the means? The mines of Mexico and Peru disemboweled would hardly pay a penny in the pound of the cost."

Mr. McDuffie, of South Carolina, said in the Senate of the United States, while Dr. Whitman was pressing through frost and snow to St. Louis, January 25, 1843: "I would not give a pinch of snuff for the whole territory. I thank God for His mercy in placing the Rocky Mountains where they are."

Another speaker (Mr. Archer) declared that the seaboard of Oregon was "destitute of harborage, and could never have any." The *Edinburgh Review* proclaimed that "west of the Rocky Mountains the desert extends from the Mexican border to the Columbia, and the country west of the mountains is probably forever incapable of fixed settlements."

Amid all the attempts that have been made to rob Dr. Whitman of the honor due to him for the great service which he rendered to his country, it is gratifying to find that the people of Oregon and Washington are not misled by misrepresentation. A book published a year or two since

by the veteran missionary Rev. M. Eells embodies the testimony of many leading men of the Pacific Coast to the great indebtedness of the country to the early missionary movements, which largely shaped its destiny.

To sum up the proofs presented above, the following facts seem abundantly established: That the sagacity of Dr. Marcus Whitman early foresaw the struggle which was sure to come between American and European interests for the possession of the rich country on the Columbia; that in spite of the active opposition of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Jesuit priests, and against the protests of his fellow missionaries and even the moderate discouragement of the Board which he represented, he earnestly and persistently labored to secure the country to the United States; that for this purpose he undertook, almost alone and with inadequate equipments, a most arduous and perilous journey across the continent in the depths of winter; that with little sympathy or help from any quarter he courageously won over an incredulous Government to his seemingly chimerical schemes; that by his personal influence and by his published pamphlets he gathered a large band of emigrants whom he personally conducted from Missouri to Oregon: that his continued zeal in attracting subsequent bands of settlers finally cost him his life, so that both he and Mrs. Whitman having devoted themselves to Christian missions really became martyrs to the cause of American civilization on the Pacific Coast. In the State House at Salem are preserved the tomahawk that slew Dr. Whitman and a tress of hair from the head of his wife. This is well, but it is not enough.

The very first monument which the patriotism of Oregon shall rear should bear the name of Marcus Whitman.



